

Comparative property tax analysis

An analysis of North Cowichan's taxes compared to similar B.C. municipalities

Presentation to Council
January 13, 2026

Background

Nov 19, 2025 direction from Council

- Prepare a comparative report for residential property tax rates
- Use municipalities with a reasonable comparison

Council motion

THAT Council direct staff to prepare a report **analyzing the residential property tax burden in North Cowichan** using 2025 data, and comparing it with a selection of B.C. municipalities that represent reasonable and defensible comparators in terms of population size, geographic location, service levels, and assessment base;

The report include:

- **Per capita tax burden:** Total residential property taxes divided by the total population;
- **Residential tax rate:** The tax rate charged per \$1,000 of assessed property value;
- **Average tax bill:** An estimated annual tax for a representative residential property (e.g., the average assessed value in North Cowichan);
- The methodology used in the report rely on **readily available data** and be designed to allow replication in future years.
- The report **identifies the comparator municipalities** selected, **provide the rationale** for their inclusion, and offer a **high-level summary of major known differences** in service levels (e.g., recreation, fire protection) and infrastructure conditions among the comparator municipalities, based on available data.

Comparators

- Municipalities with similar population, geographic location, assessment base
- Government of B.C. data, updated in September
- Population is 2024 estimates (BC stats)

Comparators

Municipality	Population	Total assessment
Port Moody	38,942	\$ 19,768,724,601
Squamish	28,056	13,617,401,773
West Kelowna	48,880	15,689,819,880
Port Alberni	19,685	4,405,281,882
Penticton	38,665	12,266,604,522
Langford	58,320	19,221,302,358
Campbell River	38,028	11,093,331,282
Courtenay	32,409	10,137,159,176
North Cowichan	34,495	11,304,388,147

Tax rates per \$1,000

Municipality	Average house	Tax rate per \$1,000	Municipal taxes
Port Moody	\$ 1,912,333	\$ 2.50595	\$ 4,792
Squamish	1,517,821	2.59997	3,946
West Kelowna	1,020,737	2.92142	2,982
Port Alberni	516,390	5.59095	2,887
Penticton	747,566	3.56340	2,664
Langford	985,994	2.67808	2,641
Campbell River	716,653	3.46054	2,480
Courtenay	767,746	2.85130	2,189
North Cowichan	761,839	2.78604	2,123

Per capita tax rate

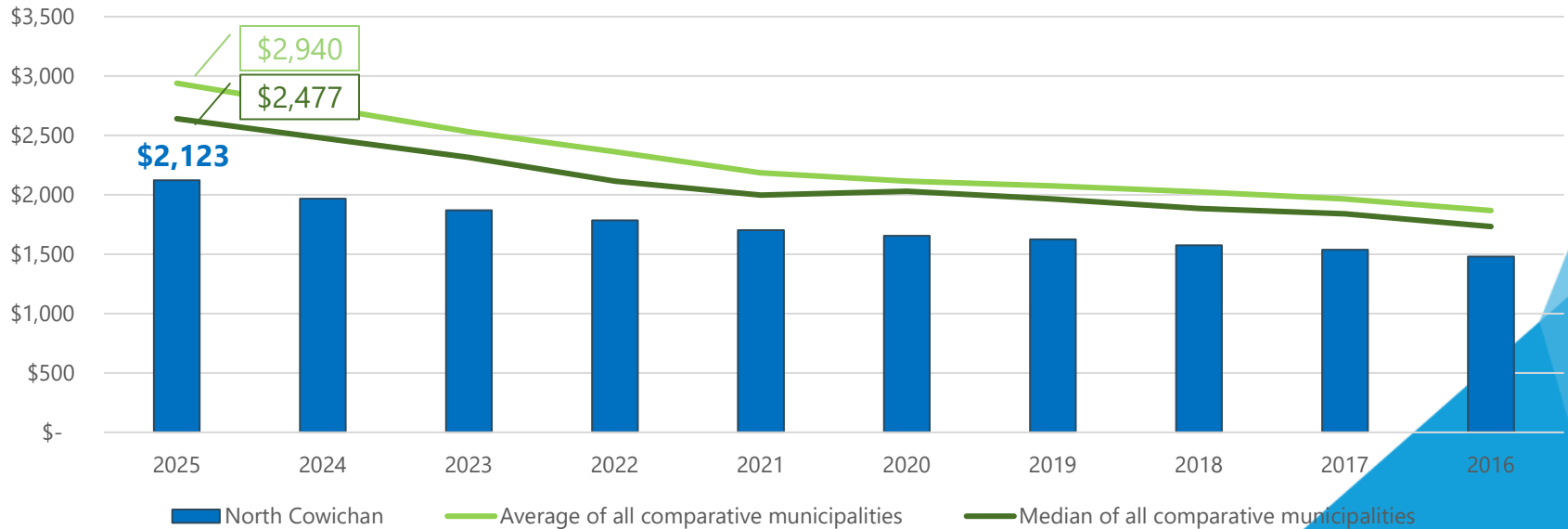
Municipalities	2024 population	Total municipal residential taxes	Residential taxes per capita
Campbell River	38,028	\$ 34,712,169	\$ 912.81
Courtenay	32,049	25,735,290	803.00
North Cowichan	34,495	28,465,912	825.22
Penticton	38,665	36,773,904	951.09
Port Moody	38,942	43,498,731	1,117.01
Squamish	28,056	29,698,249	1,058.53
West Kelowna	48,880	41,990,610	859.06
Port Alberni	19,685	21,512,984	1,092.86
Langford	58,320	44,677,668	766.08

10-year analysis (taxes only)

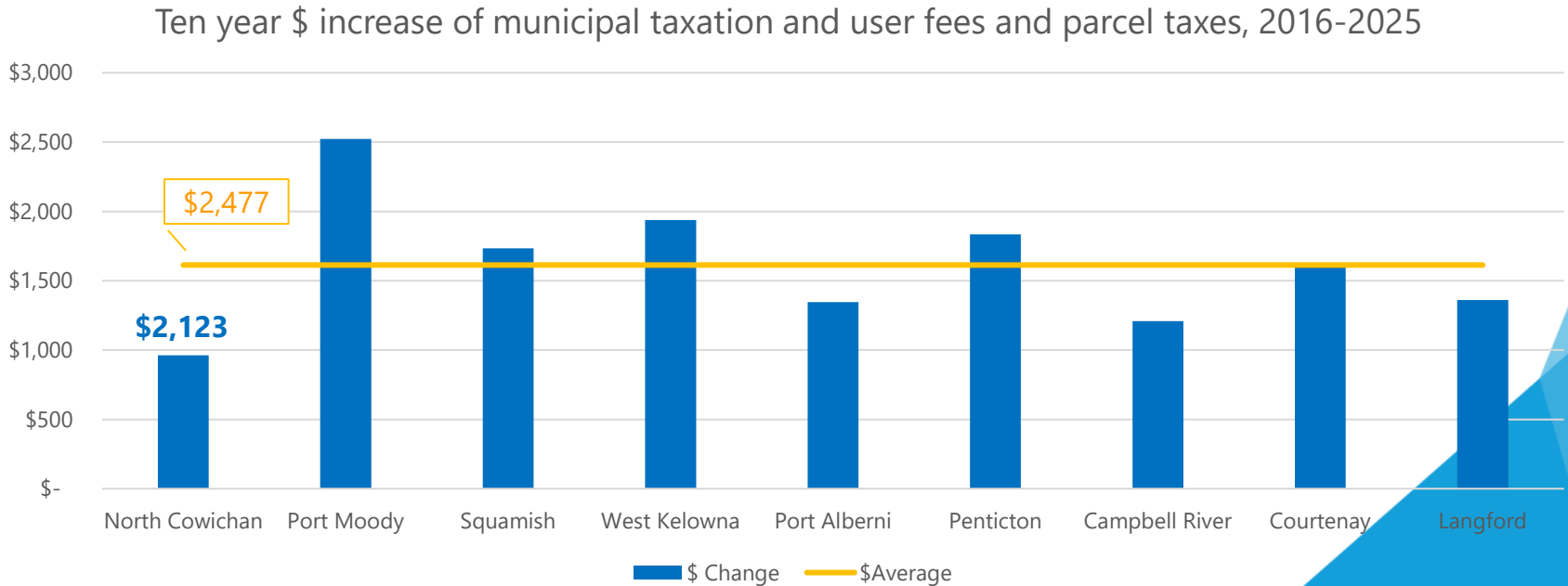
	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
North Cowichan	\$ 2,123	\$ 1,968	\$ 1,871	\$ 1,786	\$ 1,702	\$ 1,655	\$ 1,624	\$ 1,575	\$ 1,538	\$ 1,481	\$ 1,425
Port Moody	4,792	4,526	4,154	3,843	3,552	3,351	3,346	3,285	3,268	3,016	2,804
Squamish	3,946	3,468	3,203	3,189	2,947	2,799	2,784	2,789	2,708	2,560	2,449
West Kelowna	2,982	2,791	2,612	2,477	2,288	2,172	2,132	2,045	1,968	1,888	1,836
Port Alberni	2,664	2,530	2,315	2,159	1,997	2,051	1,964	1,920	1,855	1,804	1,756
Penticton	2,641	2,477	2,330	2,116	1,924	1,894	1,849	1,812	1,731	1,718	1,579
Campbell River	2,480	2,404	2,306	2,105	2,000	2,031	1,973	1,884	1,839	1,733	1,650
Courtenay	2,189	2,040	1,892	1,721	1,611	1,552	1,520	1,481	1,453	1,330	1,257
Langford	2,641	2,406	2,095	1,858	1,655	1,527	1,494	1,437	1,326	1,280	1,230
Average	\$ 2,940	\$ 2,734	\$ 2,531	\$ 2,362	\$ 2,186	\$ 2,115	\$ 2,076	\$ 2,025	\$ 1,965	\$ 1,868	\$ 1,776
Median	\$ 2,641	\$ 2,477	\$ 2,315	\$ 2,116	\$ 1,997	\$ 2,031	\$ 1,964	\$ 1,884	\$ 1,839	\$ 1,733	\$ 1,650

10-year analysis – representative tax rates

General municipal taxation on a representative house



10-year analysis – annual increases

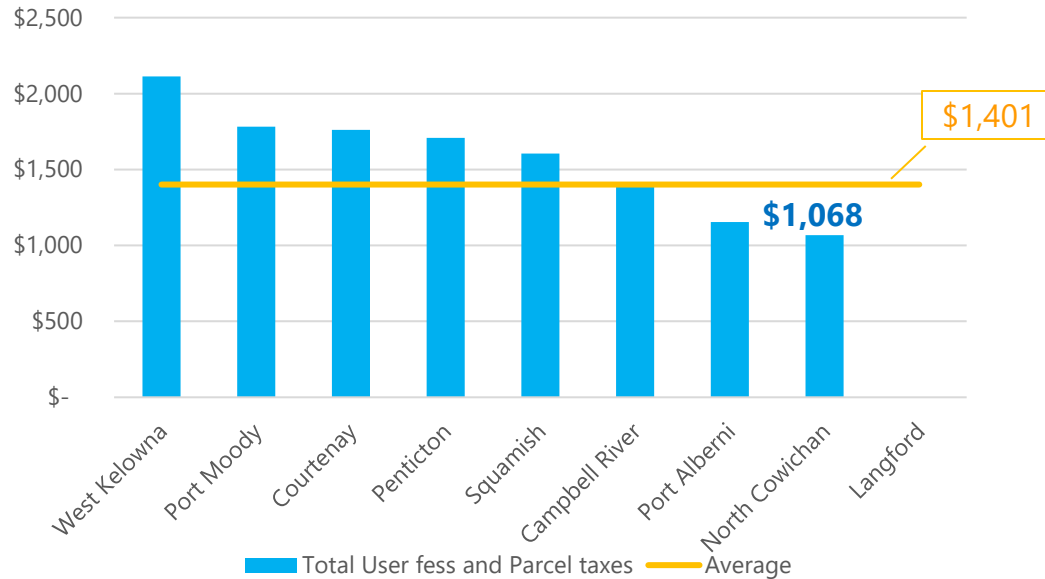


User fees and parcel taxes

Total user fees and parcel taxes (representative house)

Municipality	2025
West Kelowna	\$2,113
Port Moody	\$1,783
Courtenay	\$1,760
Penticton	\$1,709
Squamish	\$1,606
Campbell River	\$1,418
Port Alberni	\$1,154
North Cowichan	\$1,068
Langford	\$0

User fees and parcel taxes

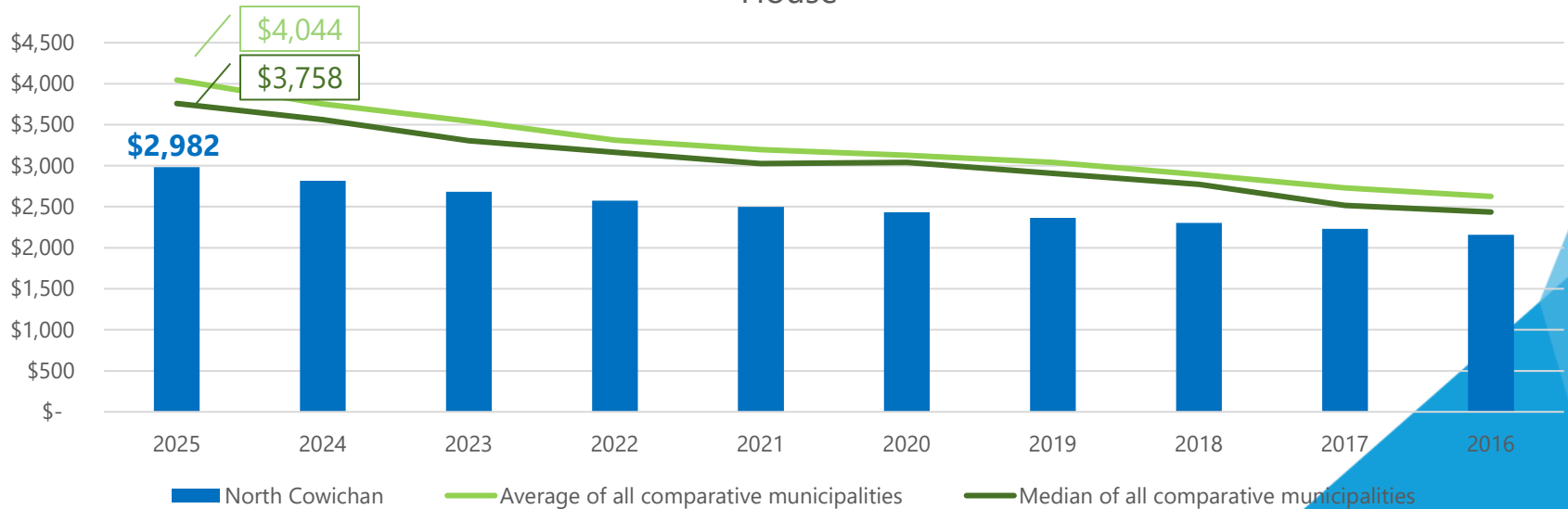


Total tax burden

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
North Cowichan	\$ 3,191	\$ 2,982	\$ 2,816	\$ 2,681	\$ 2,575	\$ 2,497	\$ 2,433	\$ 2,363	\$ 2,304	\$ 2,230
Port Moody	6,575	6,088	5,635	5,278	4,795	4,558	4,516	4,409	4,340	4,053
Squamish	5,552	5,008	4,693	4,659	4,377	4,179	4,137	4,114	4,018	3,818
West Kelowna	5,095	4,820	4,631	4,466	4,242	4,074	3,925	3,834	3,298	3,157
Port Alberni	3,818	3,628	3,367	3,168	2,911	2,947	2,775	2,706	2,601	2,473
Penticton	4,350	4,056	3,668	3,417	3,198	3,026	3,065	2,920	2,772	2,516
Campbell River	3,898	3,758	3,560	3,303	3,162	3,122	3,039	2,908	2,824	2,689
Courtenay	3,949	3,653	3,310	3,052	2,896	2,821	2,768	2,679	2,556	2,333
Langford	2,641	2,406	2,095	1,858	1,655	1,527	1,494	1,437	1,326	1,280

Total tax burden

General Municipal Taxation and User Fees and Parcel Taxes on Representative House



Findings

North Cowichan has had the lowest tax burden of our comparative communities. This low tax environment has also led to:

- Insufficient capital and equipment reserves
- Inability to absorb tax shocks such as the closing of the Crofton Mill
- Limited funding towards asset management
- Inability to fund/plan for designated areas of growth in the community
- Insufficient staffing to reflect a rapidly growing community.

Going forward

- Staff recommend that Council consider adopting a property tax policy that raises property taxes and user fees to the median level of the comparative communities over a period of 5 years to enable the organization to be able to operate effectively.
- This would be equivalent to an additional \$758 per household based on 2025.

Questions?